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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Re the Application of:

NED M. SMITH, ET AL.

Application No.: 09/784,879

Filed: February 15, 2001

For: **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR
CONTROLLING A LIFECYCLE OF AN
ELECTRONIC CONTRACT**

Art Group: 3621

Examiner: Not Assigned

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.97

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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Sir:

In accordance with the duty of disclosure, enclosed is a copy of Information Disclosure Statement by Applicant (form PTO/SB/08), which is being submitted before the mailing of a first Office Action. It is respectfully requested that the cited references be considered and that the enclosed copy of PTO/SB/08 be initialed by the Examiner to indicate such consideration and a copy thereof returned to applicant(s). Copies of the references cited on PTO/SB/08 are enclosed herewith.

It is hereby stated that no item of information contained in the Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the undersigned, after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the Information Disclosure Statement was known to any individual associated with the filing or prosecution of the subject application more than three months prior to the filing of the Information Disclosure Statement.

The references were cited in a Search Report dated June 16, 2003 (copy enclosed herewith) from a foreign patent office in a counterpart PCT application, which was forwarded to Applicant's Representative in a communication dated June 30, 2003.

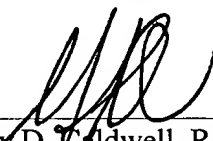
The submission of this Information Disclosure Statement is not to be construed as a representation that a search has been made in the subject application and is not to be construed as an admission that the information cited in this statement is material to patentability.

Please charge any fees due to Deposit Account 02-2666. A duplicate copy of the Fee Transmittal (PTO/SB/17) is enclosed for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: July 15, 2003



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.



Deborah L. Higham

07-15-03

Date